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Sustainability at Stafford Creek Corrections Center

Operations

- **Recycle Center:** The recycle center at [Stafford Creek Corrections Center](#) was completed in 2009 and allows the facility to sort all outgoing trash for materials that can be diverted from the waste stream. Facility savings from this process have averaged \$102,000 annually. The offenders who work in this area are exposed to all aspects of waste stream management which can be useful in an increasingly green-collar job market.
- **Clothing Recycling:** All clothing that is sorted out of the waste stream, turned in when offenders are released, or is sorted out as unusable is sent to Washington Corrections Center to be sorted to be re-issued or baled and recycled.
- **Shoe Recycling:** All used shoes are sent to Washington Corrections Center. From there they are sorted for re-issue, or sent to the re-use-a shoe program in Wilsonville, Oregon, sponsored by Nike.
- **Metal Recycling:** All scrap metal sorted from the waste stream is sold to a local recycling company.
- **Cardboard Recycling:** All cardboard is separated from the waste stream and recycled. Stafford Creek is currently recovering between 9 and 10 tons of cardboard per month.
- **Plastic Chip Bag Recycling:** Plastic potato chip bags are sorted from the waste stream and shipped via prepaid freight to a company in New York where they make them into retail products.
- **Pallets:** Stafford Creek recycle 30 to 45 tons of pallets each year. The pallets are sold to a local company that sorts and resells them. Broken pallets are taken to a local paper mill where they are used as hog fuel to operate their steam turbine and produce electricity.
- **Recycling Cooking Oil:** All used cooking oil from food services is sold to General Biodiesel in Seattle where they convert it into biodiesel fuel.
- **Facility Trading Post:** A resource bulletin board was created on Microsoft Outlook where items such as surplus office furniture and office supplies are listed.
- **Trash Can Liner Reduction:** Stafford Creek saves about \$45,000 per year by significantly reducing the number of plastic trashcan liners it uses.
- **Compost Center:** This new addition to the facility will allow the composting of all food waste. By eliminating disposal fees, the facility anticipates savings of at least \$75,000 annually. The offenders who work in this area will learn all aspects of operating a large in-vessel compost unit.
- **Food Waste Sorting:** All kitchen food waste is sorted on site and sent to Silver Springs Organics in Tenino, Wash. This benefits the facility from sending about 550 tons of material to the landfill.
- **Greenhouses:** The 2,800-square-foot greenhouse was acquired at no cost from the Tacoma School District. It was relocated to Stafford Creek in 2008 and became the cornerstone of its horticultural services program. Offenders who work in this area learn all aspects of the horticultural industry. Positions in the gardens have become very sought after.
- **Lawn Mowers:** Gas-powered push mowers were replaced by reel mowers pushed by offenders. Reel mowers use no gasoline and produce zero emissions.

- **Organic Gardens:** Organic gardens are maintained by the offenders, producing up to 10,000 pounds of vegetables used in the kitchen.
- **Water Reclamation:** This pilot program is a 1000-gallon water storage tank connected to the Engineering building rain gutters. The water collected is used in the greenhouse and on the organic gardens during periods of moderate rainfall.
- **Bicycles from Heaven:** This program started in 2003, as a partnership with the local Lions Club. Six offenders participate and can refurbish up to 600 bicycles annually. All bicycles are donated to groups in need.

Nature Programs

- **Endangered Perennial Plants:** In 2009, Stafford Creek began a partnership with The Nature Conservancy to grow 200,000 endangered perennial plants for habitat restoration on the Southwest Washington prairies. This was initiated by the [Sustainable Prisons Project](#) and has led to a program that allows up to 10 offenders to participate each year. In 2010, the program expanded to 350,000 plants.
- **Beehives:** Beehives were introduced in 2008 as part of the sustainability training programs. The Sustainable Prisons Project provided bee lectures and workshops in 2009 and the facility now produces its own honey products.
- **Lecture Series:** Since 2008 the “Learn Green Live Green” lecture series has taught the staff and offenders about habitat restoration, waste stream management and green-collar job opportunities.
- **Sustainability Awareness:** The Sustainability Committee hosts an annual Earth Day Fair. This popular event brings sustainability awareness to both the staff and offenders. Some of the vendors that participate are Grays Harbor Paper, Grays Harbor Public Utilities District, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Silver Springs Organics, The Home Depot, Fiesta Vending, General Biodiesel, Department of Ecology, Washington State University Extension, Sustainable Prisons Project, and Grays Harbor College.
- **Birdhouses:** Using materials provided by the Western Bluebird Recovery Team, offenders constructed 150 blue bird boxes, most of which are sent to the San Juan Islands.
- **Bat Boxes:** Offenders are working on prototype bat boxes and are expected to build about 40 to be located on the Joint Base Lewis-McChord. The work is being done under the partnership with the Sustainable Prisons Project.
- **Dog Program:** Stafford Creek formed a partnership with a local nonprofit group to create the Freedom Tails dog program. Offenders at Stafford Creek give shelter dogs a second chance at life by teaching them much needed obedience skills so they can make better home pets and become adoptable. The offenders who participate gain a sense of responsibility and empathy. There is early indication that having dogs in prison living units reduces the number of violent infractions.

Facilities

- **In-Floor Hydronic Heating:** In-floor hydronic heating was installed in offender dress-down rooms. The warm floor reduces the use of the room heater by up to 35 percent annually. Stafford Creek is working with Correctional Industries to install a solar array that will provide heat for the system.
- **Hydronic Boilers:** The installation of hydronic boilers and water-heat exchangers was completed in six housing units in 2008. These systems replace inefficient, outdated gas-fired heat exchangers. These upgrades resulted in energy savings of 25 percent to 30 percent annually in the affected areas.
- **Hot-Water Steam Booster:** Installation of a hot-water steam booster replaced an inefficient 400-gallon gas-fired water heater. Now only heating water as needed rather than maintaining hundreds of gallons of water at 120 degrees.

- **Wastewater Heat Recovery System:** When the laundry facility was created, the decision to include a wastewater heat recovery system was incorporated into the design. The drain water from the washing machines is filtered and passed through a heat exchanger. The result is a rise in temperature of the incoming cold water between 5 and 15 degrees and reduces
- **Facility Re-Lamping:** A facility-wide interior re-lamping process was completed in 2007. This reduced wattage from 32 watts to 25 watts, a reduction of 23 percent. So far 12,000 lamps have been changed, having an annual energy savings of more than \$11,000.
- **Perimeter Lighting:** In 2009 the perimeter light fixtures were replaced with a more durable model that did not impact light coverage. The change reduced hourly power usage by 38 percent, from 69.2 kilowatts to 43 kilowatts.
- **Waste Oil Heater:** A waste oil heater is used in the facility motor pool to supplement the heat for that building. It will handle all the waste oil created from the facility vehicles. This reduces energy needs for heating as well as safely eliminating a hazardous waste.

Additional Information

Visit the Department of Corrections' [sustainability website](#) for statewide information.